

the Armand cave in the Lozère, and of a lagoon in the Great Barrier reef of Australia. Chapter III. is entitled "The Forms of the Mineral Kingdom" and gives an account of the formation of crystals and precious stones. Chapter IV. treats of the origin and development of terrestrial life (colored plate of siphonophores; photographs of the moon, the Colorado canon). The fifth chapter describes the kingdom of the Protista; the sixth, the "Youth of the Plant-World" (colored plate of mimicry of crustacea; photographs of basalt scenery). Chapter VII. has for its subject "Animal Colonies"; Chapter VIII. is devoted to "The Predecessors of the Higher Animal Forms" (colored lithograph of mimicry in insects); Chapter IX. to the echinoderms, etc.; Chapter X. to the Mollusca, etc., "The First Landlords" (photographs of the carboniferous period, etc.). The title of Chapter XI. is "From the Multiped to the Quadruped"; of Chapter XII., "The Vesture of the Earth" (beautiful color-plate of the development of the violet, photographs of the fauna and flora of the geologic periods. The volume ends with Chapter XII., and besides 28 plates above indicated contains 396 cuts in the text.

The book, which is dedicated to Ernst Haeckel, contains a notable preface in which the author states his position with respect to the relations between religion and science, the responsibility which rests on every creed of sloughing off its superstitions as these are revealed by growing science, and above all the education of our youth from the point of view of absolute verifiable truth. The picture of the world here so beautifully portrayed by Carus Sterne is the picture that has been revealed by the patient toil of countless investigators extending through many centuries; it is that of science, philosophy, and religion in one; whoever wishes to contemplate the truth about the world in which we live, as that truth is shaped today, will do well to consult its pages, and they will find that their quest has been not in vain and that their efforts have been amply and pleasantly repaid.

---

## ANCIENT CIVILISATION IN EASTERN TURKESTAN.

A great sensation was created at the last international congress of Orientalists at Rome, in 1899, by the exhibition of a magnificent collection belonging to the British government, of antiquities gathered in the western part of Eastern Turkestan, and by a report of the important discoveries made by a Russian expedition in the eastern provinces of the same territory. These discoveries and explorations have acquainted us with the astounding fact that up to nearly one thousand years ago Eastern Turkestan was the seat of a luxuriant and thriving civilisation which reflected in its extraordinarily composite character the influence of the neighboring Chinese, Indian, and Græco-Asiatic civilisations.

The English collection consists of manuscripts and woodcuts, coins and seals, terra cottas and similar sculptures which were found in graves, towers, and other buildings, and dug up from localities covered with driftsand.

The most important find of the Russian expedition (1898) was the discovery of not less than 160 artificial caverns, which in some cases were connected with surface buildings in imitation of the various Buddhistic subterranean cloisters and temples of India. Many of these buildings are decorated with Chinese, Indian, and Turkish inscriptions, and with religious and secular frescoes.

The inscriptions are the most important of all these antiquities, for the reason that they are nearly all written in unknown characters and languages, which have quite unexpectedly placed Oriental research before an astonishing set of problems

the solution of which will greatly enrich our knowledge of Middle-Asiatic chirographic lore, languages, and history.

Of the highest importance also are the works of sculpture and painting, for the reason that they represent interesting and scientifically significant relationships between Chinese, Indian, Persian, Græco-Roman, and Western Asiatic art.

Yet, valuable as the results of the English and Russian explorations are, they represent nevertheless but a comparatively small portion of the discoveries in chirography, painting, and sculpture which might be brought to light by a more thorough and systematic exploration of the region in question. To this end, the excavation of cities which have been covered by sand-storms will be necessary, and the equipment of a scientific expedition to Eastern Turkestan for this purpose would require considerable money. There is a movement on foot in Germany to equip such an expedition, and all persons who are interested in promoting the enterprise should communicate with Dr. Georg Huth, care of Kgl. Museum für Völkerkunde, Königrätzer-Str. 120, Berlin, S. W., Germany.

### A FREETHOUGHT INSTITUTE FOR LONDON.

The freethought circles of England and America will be gratified to learn that their movement is recently showing indications of taking a more enduring and prominent form. We learn from a communication from Mr. Charles A. Watts, of London, that a philanthropic friend of the cause, Mr. George Anderson, who is approaching eighty years of age, and whose benefactions in behalf of free thought have in the past years been considerable, has invited Mr. Watts, "in conjunction with a few trusted friends, to arrange for the building of a Freethought Institute in London, to the cost of which he will contribute the handsome sum of 15,000 pounds sterling if an additional 15,000 pounds be subscribed for completing and endowing the building. Negotiations," the circular continues, "have already commenced with a view to acquiring a splendid site in a most populous centre, but no final decision will be arrived at pending the response to this proposal. The intended Institute will consist of a large hall, a minor hall, club and class rooms, a library, and residential accommodation. It is desired to establish a comprehensive Society, embracing all sections of the Freethought and Ethical movement, and in which the ideal and the practical aspects of Rationalism will be equally represented. The Sunday meetings will comprise organ recitals, readings from works of rational and ethical interest, addresses from well-known and representative speakers, and singing. A systematic endeavor will be made to enlist the support of women. A Sunday School for children and young persons will be a prominent feature, and social gatherings will be held regularly each week. Various courses of lectures will be delivered and classes held, according to the needs of those frequenting the Institution. Among other subjects, it is hoped that logic, philosophy, literature, psychology, ethics, and sociology will be dealt with, while opportunities will be provided for discussions to take place each week. There will also be classes for the study of elocution and the dramatic art, and of the other fine arts, should a sufficient demand arise. It is also intended to afford facilities to students who contemplate devoting their energies to the propagation of rational thought, and in this way a valuable educational centre may be established. There will be a large book shop in connexion with the Institute, and from this department a fair revenue is anticipated. Not only rationalistic, scientific, ethical, and educational works, but